

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 5

March 6, 2007

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS ON FEBRUARY 27, 2007

SUBJECT: BODY ARMOR FOR SWORN PERSONNEL AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ASSISTING IN FIELD OPERATIONS

PURPOSE: Currently, Department policy requires sworn personnel to wear body armor when involved in any pre-planned tactical operation where there is reason to believe an individual(s) may use a firearm to resist, when serving a felony arrest warrant on a suspect not in custody, or during search warrant service. Absent this requirement, sworn personnel were not required to wear body armor while assigned to a uniformed duty assignment, such as patrol. Additionally, a recent Use of Force Review Board revealed that civilian personnel assisting sworn personnel during tactical field operations were not required to wear body armor.

This Order establishes uniform procedures for the issuance of body armor (ballistic vest) to civilian personnel assisting in field operations, and implements Department procedure for the mandatory usage of body armor for all sworn and civilian personnel while performing field related duties.

PROCEDURE: All sworn personnel shall wear Department approved body armor when assigned to field related duties. Additionally, identified civilian personnel shall wear Department approved body armor during all pre-planned tactical operations, and during any potentially violent situation in the field. All body armor issued, or purchased for use by Department personnel, shall meet or exceed Department specifications, and shall also be certified according to the most current National Institute of Justice (NIJ) standards at the time of purchase. Training Division has identified several civilian entities that are periodically tasked with responding to the field to assist sworn personnel. The following civilian personnel shall be required to have body armor in their possession when responding to field operations:

- * Audio-Visual Technicians;
- * Forensic Print Specialists;
- * Photographers;
- * Criminalists;
- * Police Surveillance Specialists;
- * Firearms Examiners;
- * Officers in Charge of these respective units; and,

- * All other civilian personnel that may respond to the field to assist sworn personnel in a violent or tactical situation.

I. SWORN EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES. All sworn personnel shall:

- * Wear body armor at all times while engaged in uniform field duties; and,

Note: Sworn personnel working an off-duty uniform assignment (i.e., the Coliseum or Sports Arena) shall adhere to the on-duty requirements of this directive.

- * Plain-clothes detectives who are in the field conducting tactical operations or engaged in field operations likely to result in contact with the suspect(s) shall wear body armor.

Note: Detectives out in the field conducting interviews of witnesses are not required to wear body armor.

- * Undercover officers (i.e. Vice and Narcotics) are exempt from wearing body armor when the wearing of body armor compromises their undercover position as a police officer. Undercover officers involved in undercover operations, such as close cover officers, shall wear body armor in all field operations when the wearing of body armor does not jeopardize the operation.

Note: The Commanding Officer can exempt plain-clothes officers from wearing body armor when deemed necessary.

- * Return previously issued, and/or expired armor to Supply Section personnel, once the employee has received new body armor.

Note: If body armor is not issued to, or returned by the employee, the reason shall be documented in writing on an Employee's Report, Form 15.7, to the employee's Commanding Officer.

II. CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES. Civilian personnel assigned to assist sworn personnel during tactical field operations (where violence is likely to occur), shall:

- * Wear body armor; and,

Note: In any field situation where there may be a potential for violence, civilian personnel shall wear body armor. It is difficult to foresee when a stale situation may become violent; therefore, civilians shall have their body armor accessible to them at all times while performing field duties (i.e., in the vehicle or duty bag). Personnel tasked with responding to a pre-planned tactical operation, who do not have body armor, shall report to Fiscal Operations Division (FOD), Supply Section Uniform Shop, to check out and return body armor from the "loaner" stock.

- * Return previously issued and/or expired armor to Supply Section.

Note: If body armor is not issued to, or returned by the employee, the reason shall be documented in writing on an Employee's Report, Form 15.7, to the employee's Commanding Officer.

III. SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES. All supervisors assigned to uniform field duties shall:

- * Wear body armor at all times while engaged in field assignments;
- * Ensure that all sworn and civilian personnel involved in field operations wear body armor; and
- * When involved in a pre-planned tactical operation (i.e., search warrants), supervisors shall specify which officers shall wear concealable body armor, and which officers, if any, shall wear external body armor.

IV. AREA/DIVISIONAL TRAINING COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

Training Coordinators in each Area/division shall:

- * Ensure that all sworn and civilian personnel involved in actual field operations are issued body armor;

- * Schedule assigned personnel for fitting, to ensure all employees are fitted on their pre-scheduled Area/divisional fitting date during their normal watch hours;
- * Pick up all body armor fitted in their Area/division and verify the number received with the invoiced amount from Supply Section;
- * Ensure the safekeeping of the body armor received and distribute the body armor to the assigned employees;
- * Maintain records of personnel fitted/not fitted and body armor distributed/not distributed; and,
- * Maintain records of body armor expiration dates, and ensure that personnel are fitted and distributed new body armor prior to their five (5) year expiration date.

V. COMMANDING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES. Commanding Officers shall:

- * Designate an employee, in the absence of a Training Coordinator, to ensure the proper issuance and return of body armor to sworn and specified civilian personnel;
- * Ensure that the expiration date has not expired on the body armor issued to all sworn and civilian personnel assigned to your Area/division;
- * Ensure that all sworn and civilian personnel involved in field operations are approved for and issued body armor prior to going in the field; and,
- * Authorize the exemptions of plain-clothes officers from wearing body armor when deemed necessary.

AMENDMENTS: This Order amends Sections 3/628.10 and 3/628.20 of the Department Manual.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITIES: The Commanding Officer of each affected bureau shall monitor compliance with this directive in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.

WILLIAM J. BRATTON
Chief of Police

DISTRIBUTION "D"